

VZCZCXRO5714
RR RUEHPA
DE RUEHAR #0024/01 0131439
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 131439Z JAN 09
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7470
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ACCRA 000024

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [ECON](#) [GH](#)

SUBJECT: MILLS MOVES QUICKLY TO CONTROL LEVERS OF GOVERNMENT

Classified By: POLCHIEF GPERGL for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1.(SBU) SUMMARY. President Mills has moved quickly to establish his authority over key security and economic ministries, naming NDC party loyalists to serve as interim heads of the Ministries of Defense, Interior, and Finance. Mills' 2004 running mate, Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni, will be interim head of the Ministry of Interior, while retired Admiral E.O. Owusu Ansah will oversee the Ministry of Defense. A trio of economic technocrats, including Dr. Kwabena Duffour, Togbe Afede and Moses Asaga, will supervise the Ministry of Finance. Mills also made his first three permanent appointments (subject to parliamentary approval), naming former Brigadier General Joseph Nunoo Mensah to serve as his National Security Advisor, Mahama Ayariga as Presidential Spokesman and James Bebak-Mensah as Secretary to the Cabinet. Other ministries will be headed by their respective Chief Directors or senior civil servants until further notice. Hannah Tetteh, spokesperson for the Mills transition team, said the appointees will only have supervisory roles until substantive ministers are approved. Ghana's constitution requires Ministers to be vetted by a parliamentary committee, a process that normally delays the sitting of a cabinet for weeks following an election. Mills' interim ministers show a combination of loyalty and government experience. END SUMMARY

12. (C) Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni, named to the sensitive Interior Ministry, is one of Mills' most trusted confidants and was NDC vice presidential candidate during Mills' unsuccessful 2004 run for office. Mumuni is a lawyer and was Minister of Manpower during the Rawlings years. He is an ethnic Adoni, from northern Ghana. The Ministry of Interior contains the Ghana Police Service, the Narcotics Control Board, Immigration and the Prisons Service.

13. (C) One of Mills' more interesting choices was his selection of Brigadier (rtd.) Joseph Nunoo Mensah as his new National Security Advisor. Mensah was twice Chief of Defense Staff, first in 1979 and then in 1982. He was also a member of the Provisional National Defense Council which overthrew the government of Dr. Hilla Lyman in 1981, but he resigned less than a year later due to differences with Jerry Rawlings. Until 2006, he had been a long-time member of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), and in 1998 he managed Nana Akufo-Addo's unsuccessful attempt to become the party's presidential candidate. Over time, Mensah became disenchanted with the NPP, which he saw as too corrupt and too biased toward the ethnic Ashanti. (Note: Others view him as a political opportunist willing to switch sides when advantages to do so. End Note.) He is still close to former President Rawlings-- a meeting with Rawlings during the campaign led to the Kufuor government's decision to ban Mensah from military facilities. Mensah was also present when Rawlings met December 27 with A/S Jendayi Frazer.

14. (C) Vice Admiral (rtd.) E.O. Owusu Ansah was named by Mills as interim head of the Defense Ministry. Ansah served

as Commander of the Navy from 1996 to 2001, an appointment he received from former President Rawlings, with whom it is believed he remains close. Ansah received advanced training in the U.K, and is remembered for his efforts to modernize and professionalize Ghana's navy.

¶5. (C) Mills has named three technocrats with NDC histories to be interim managers of Ghana's Finance Ministry. The team will be headed by Togbe Afede, a former academic, banker, and traditional leader from the Ho area in the Volta Region. Mills previously had named Afede to his transition team. (Note: Under Ghana's constitution, traditional leaders are prohibited from partisan political positions. End Note.) Dr. Kwabena Duffour is a bank CEO, who also has an interest in an insurance company. He was Governor of the Central Bank, but left that position in 2001 when the NPP came to power. Duffour is reportedly a major financier for the NDC. Moses Asaga has served in parliament since 1996, is an economist by training, and was Deputy Finance Minister under Rawlings.

¶6. (SBU) Former President Rawlings was quick to praise Mills' appointments, particularly those involving the military and security services. Rawlings, through a statement signed by an aide, said that he was certain that the "noble Generals would work to restore the quality of discipline of the security services to the levels they left it."

¶7. (C) COMMENT. Ghana's constitution allows the president to name up to half of his cabinet ministers from outside of parliament, so it is likely that some of those named as interim managers will reappear later as substantive ministers

ACCRA 00000024 002 OF 002

or senior advisors. Mumuni, for example, is close to Mills and likely to have a prominent role in the new government. As a northerner and a Muslim, his appointment would help provide regional and religious balance. Mills has appointed interim ministers with experience in their fields, showing a desire on his part to quickly gain control over the bureaucracy, which after eight years of NPP rule is seen as suspect by many in the NDC. The police and security services, especially, are staffed with officials appointed by the NPP, and their loyalty will be a concern to the new government. Mills' recent appointments all received their public service experience under former President Rawlings. As Rawlings was President for most of the 1979-2000 period, and founded the NDC, anyone with NDC sympathies who has substantive governmental experience will, to some degree, have a connection to Rawlings. The next few months will tell how past loyalties to Rawlings realign to the new president.
TEITELBAUM